



Labor Force Participation of Veterans: 2000 to 2009

Prepared by the National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics
November 2010

Data Source and Methods

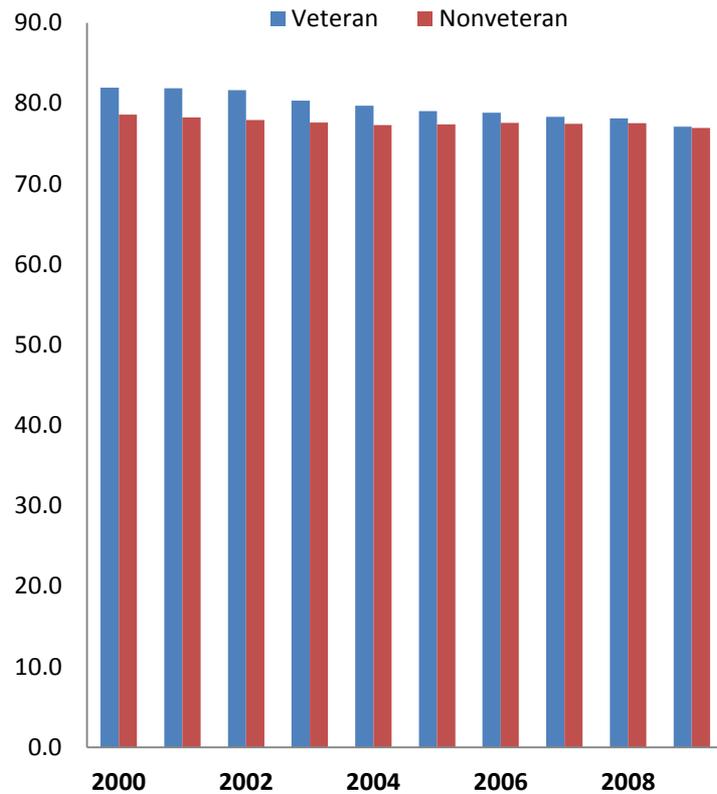
- Data for this analysis come from 10 years of Current Population Survey (CPS) data.
 - The CPS is the official source of employment statistics for the nation.
 - The CPS is a monthly survey of about 50,000 households conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- Labor force participation rates were calculated as annual averages.
- The universe for this analysis is the population **18 to 64 years old**.
- All comparative statements have undergone statistical testing and are significant at the 90-percent confidence level.

What is a labor force participation rate?

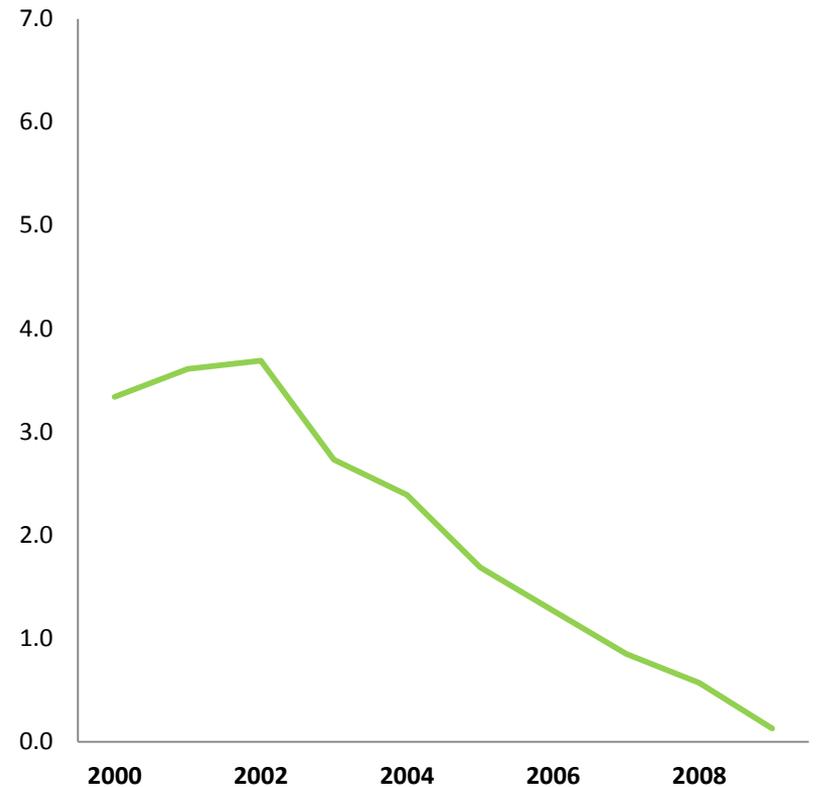
- The **labor force participation rate** represents the proportion of the total population that is in the civilian labor force.
- For example, if there are 100 people in the population 16 years and over, and 64 of them are in the civilian labor force, then the labor force participation rate for the population 16 years and over would be 64 percent.
- The **civilian labor force** is the total employed and unemployed population. Active-duty military are excluded.

In 2000, Veterans had higher labor force participation rates than nonveterans. Over the decade that difference has become statistically insignificant.

Labor Force Participation Rates by Veteran Status for the Population 18 to 64 Years Old
(in percent)

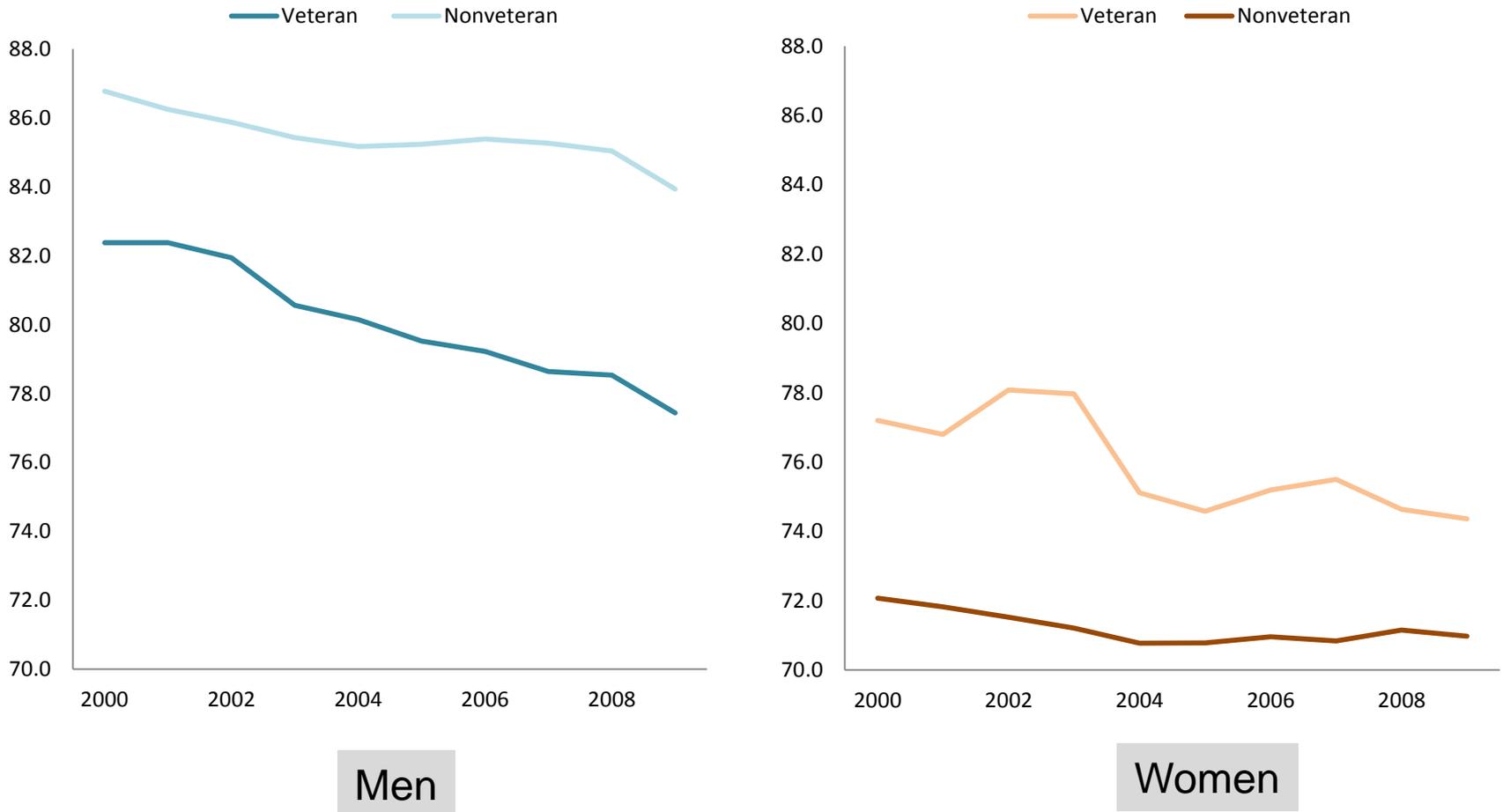


Percentage Point Difference between Veteran and Nonveteran Labor Force Participation Rates



Across the decade, female Veterans had higher labor force participation rates than their nonveteran counterparts, while male Veterans' labor force participation rates were lower. Rates for male Veterans, male nonveterans, and female nonveterans have been decreasing since 2000, while rates for female Veterans were not statistically different.

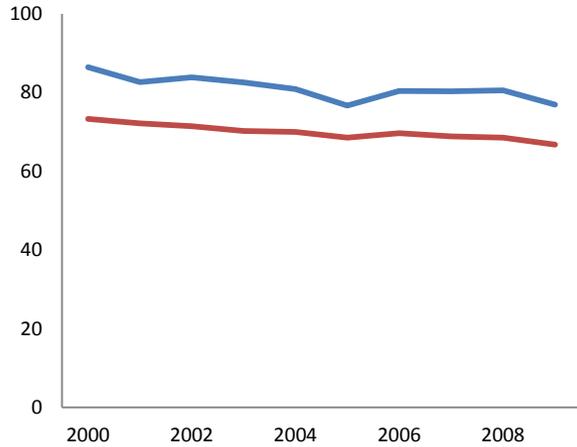
Labor Force Participation Rates by Sex and Veteran Status for the Population 18 to 64 Years Old
(in percent)



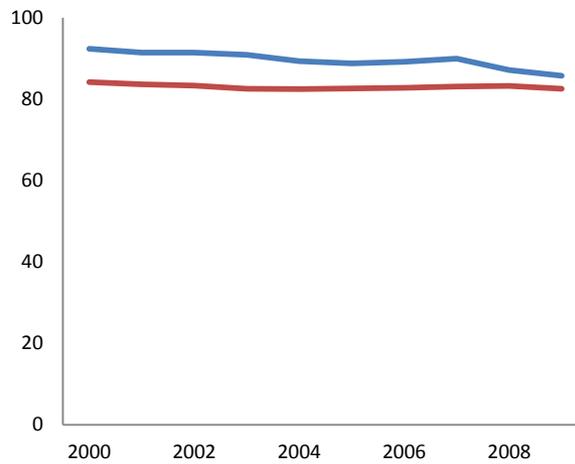
Veterans in all age groups had higher labor force participation rates than nonveterans each year from 2000 to 2009, with one exception. The rates for 55- to 64-year-old Veterans and nonveterans in 2008 and 2009 were not statistically different.

— Veteran — Nonveteran

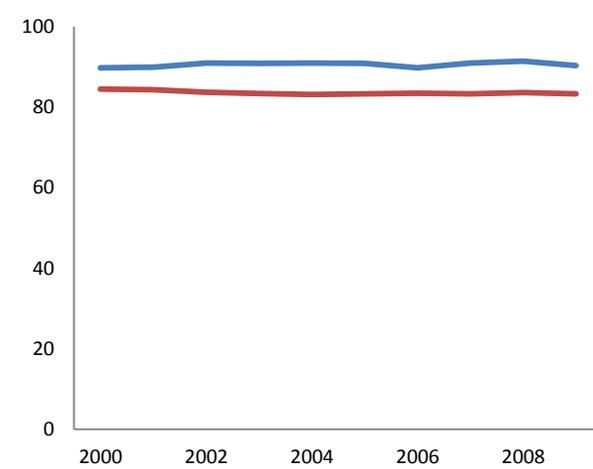
18 to 24 Year Olds



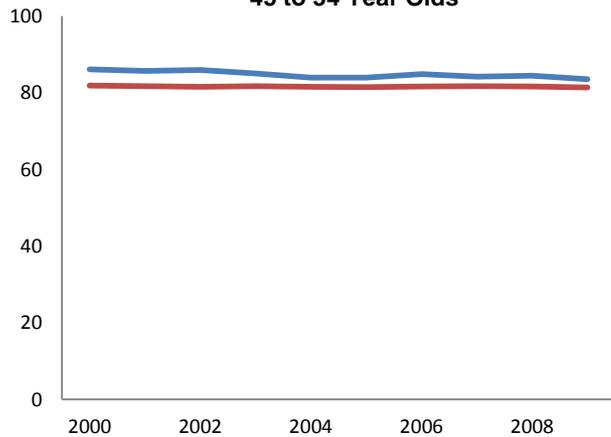
25 to 34 Year Olds



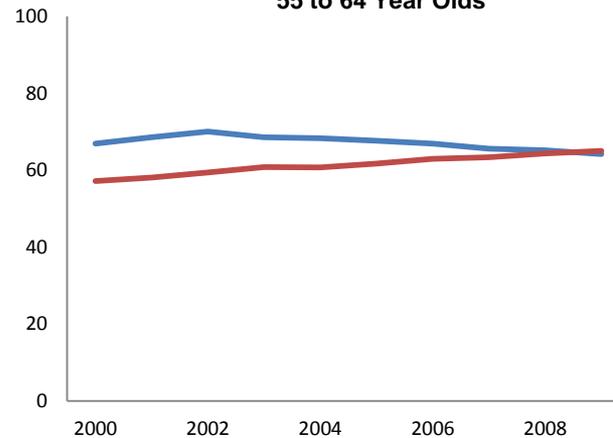
35 to 44 Year Olds



45 to 54 Year Olds

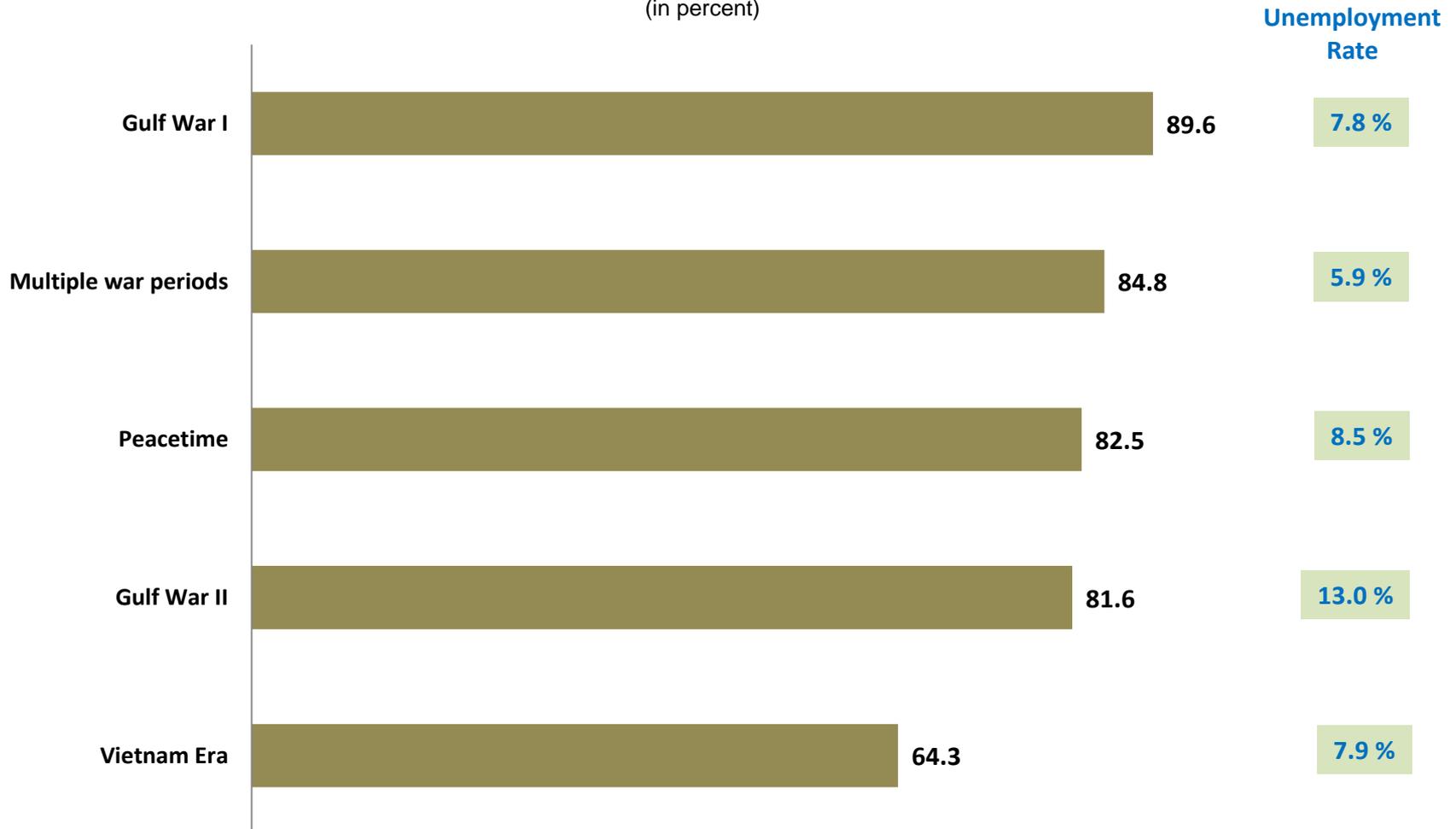


55 to 64 Year Olds



Gulf War I Veterans had the highest labor force participation rate. Vietnam-era Veterans, the largest and oldest cohort (ages 55 to 64 years), had the lowest labor force participation rate in 2009.

Labor Force Participation Rates by Period of Service: 2009
(in percent)



Note: Periods of service shown here are mutually exclusive (i.e., Gulf War I Veterans served only in Gulf War I).

Summary

Between 2000 and 2009, the difference between the labor force participation of Veterans and nonveterans has decreased. In 2009, about 77 percent of Veterans and nonveterans 18 to 64 years old participated in the civilian labor force.

Sex is an important factor to consider when evaluating any differences between Veterans and nonveterans since the proportions of men and women in the Veteran and nonveteran population are so different. About 92 percent of Veterans 18 to 64 years old were men in 2009, compared with 45 percent of nonveterans in that age group. Female Veterans had higher labor force participation rates than their nonveteran counterparts every year from 2000 to 2009. In contrast, the labor force participation rates of male Veterans were lower than those of male nonveterans each year. The labor force participation rate of male Veterans has been decreasing since 2000 while the rate for female Veterans was not statistically different from 2000 to 2009.

Age is another important factor to consider when comparing Veterans and nonveterans. Veterans, on average, are older than nonveterans. The median age of Veterans in this analysis was 53 years in 2009, compared with 41 years for nonveterans. Veterans in all age groups had higher labor force participation rates than nonveterans with the exception of 55- to 64-year-old Veterans and nonveterans in 2008 and 2009. Vietnam-era Veterans, the oldest cohort, had the lowest labor force participation rate in 2009.

Contact Information

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